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Afghan Agricultural Research and Extension Development Program (AGRED)



Monthly Report

December, 2012

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Afghan Agricultural Research & Extension Development Program (AGRED)

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Contracting Officer's Representative	Mark Kelly, PhD
Contracting Officer's Representative	Mohammed Junaid
Contract Officer	Paul Martin
Chief of Party	Kingsley Bash, PhD, kingsley.bash@rootsofpeace.org
ROP CEO	Heidi Kuhn, heidi@rootsofpeace.org
ROP President	Gary Kuhn, gary@rootsofpeace.org



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PROJECT INFORMATION

AGRED PURPOSE

In partnership with Afghan farmers, the USAID/AGRED Program supports the Afghan government to build enduring, effective research and extension systems. The result will include increased agricultural jobs and incomes.

AGRED PROGRAM COMPONENTS

1. **Research and Extension** - Applied research and provision of extension and advisory services.
2. **Training** - Training and capacity building of research and extension staff to deliver services to Afghan communities.
3. **Communication** - More effective communication with and increased access to improved technologies, knowledge and education with emphasis on agriculture best practices by Afghan farmers.
4. **Infrastructure** - Improved agricultural research and extension infrastructure in 7 target sub-national Research Centers and fifty target districts.

AGRED PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this program is to increase agricultural productivity and income through the application of science and technology. The Afghan Agricultural Research and Extension Development (AGRED) program will build the capacity of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan's (GIROA) Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL) and Directorates of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (DAIL) to sustainably procure, develop and deploy productivity-enhancing technologies and good farming practices. The program will strengthen the technical skills of research and extension professionals in state-of-the-art extension and advisory service delivery approaches and methods through on-the-job and formal trainings. AGRED will facilitate farmers' access to improved technologies and practices, integrate research and extension systems, and rebuild critical assets of selected Research Centers.

AGRED's capacity development program will focus on MAIL and DAILs in seven provinces - Balkh, Herat, Kabul, Kandahar, Kunduz, Nangarhar and Paktya, and on 50 MAIL priority districts in these and 19 other provinces: Kapisa, Parwan, Wardak, Ghazni, Helmand, Zabul, Uruzghan, Laghman, Kunar, Takhar, Baghlan, Bamyan, Badakhshan, Jawzjan, Samangan, Sar-i-Pul, Logar, Faryab and Badghis.

HIGHLIGHTS

RESEARCH AND EXTENSION – MAIL and AGRED prepared mini-proposals (12 for research and 19 for extension) for DAIL research and extension programs based on the priorities identified in the seven Stakeholder Workshops conducted in November.

AGRED participated in Agriculture Technical Working Group meetings (ATWG) in the seven target provinces. AGRED also conducted coordination meetings with DAIL Directors, Research and Extension Managers, Rural Rehabilitation and Development (RRD) and the Education and Economic Directors in target provinces. It met with MAIL women working in extension, livestock and Home Economics to identify women from seven target province to participate in extension training programs.

TRAINING - A delegation from AGRED subcontractors Washington State University and UC Davis University met with MAIL, AGRED and other stakeholder organizations to plan the training program, ensure that the future trainings are not redundant, and that they are consistent with MAIL priorities.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION - A revised PMP defines indicators and targets for both AGRED off-budget and MAIL's USAID-funded on-budget activities. The PMP was finalized and submitted to USAID for review and approval on December 17.

The AGRED M&E Specialist developed a work plan for rolling out the M&E system, beginning with a baseline study and an inventory of research and extension resources in the target provinces. The baseline study will be initiated immediately after USAID approves the PMP.



Kandahar Stakeholder Workshop

ACHEIVEMENTS IN DECEMBER

RESEARCH AND EXTENSION

PRIORITIES

- Participate in the Agriculture Technical Working Group meetings (ATWG) of seven target provinces.
- Conduct coordination meetings with DAIL Directors and Research and Extension Managers in target provinces.
- Participate in coordination meetings with RRD, Education and Economic Directors in target provinces.
- Prepare mini-proposals for research and extension projects identified in Stakeholder Workshops conducted in November.
- Follow-up on meetings with MAIL Extension, Research and Home Economics to coordinate with DAIL programs for women in AGRED's target provinces.
- Meet with MAIL Women Extension and Research, Livestock and Home Economics staff to identify women from seven target province to participate in upcoming training programs on basic extension practices.
- Draft a Gender Policy for women farmers program.

ACTIVITIES

- **Agriculture Technical Working Group meetings (ATWG) of the seven target provinces** - The objective of this meeting was to establish close coordination, smooth implementation of projects, and share of agricultural information with government authorities, UN agencies, PRTs, USAID-funded projects and national and international organizations. This Working Group Meeting was conducted on December 4, 2012 and Regional Research Coordinator (RRC) and Research Extension Coordinator (REC) participated in Kunduz Province meeting.

An ATWG meeting was held in the Balkh DAIL on December 17, 2012. AGRED RRCs and RECs participated in the meeting providing updates on mini-proposals developed as a result of Stakeholder Workshops and written in collaboration with MAIL.

The Nangarhar Province RRC and PEC participated in a subsequent ATWG meeting on December 19, 2012 and provided information about mini-proposals. The Herat PEC participated in the ATWG meeting on December 24, 2012 providing information about mini-proposals.

- **Report writing workshop** –to improve project communications and reporting, AGRED Extension and Research Coordinators from target provinces participated in a report writing

workshop held in Kabul on December 8, 2012. During this one-day training a total of 12 RRCs and RECs were trained on report writing requirements and methods.

- **Coordination Meetings with DAIL directors in Paktya Province** - AGRED field staff conducted coordination meetings with DAIL directors, DAIL advisors, research, extension, administrative managers and CBCMP project staff. The purpose of these meetings was to better coordinate and implement of agricultural activities in Paktya Province. On December 16, 2012 they met with DAIL director Haji Niaz Mohammad Lali Zadran. The discussion of DAIL Director focused on the 2013 DAIL activity plan being developed, but he also mentioned weak coordination and reporting problems in some departments. He encouraged activities coordinated directly with him and with his authorization.
- **DRRD, Education and Economic Directors Coordination meetings in target provinces** - AGRED team in Paktya Province held a meeting on December 23, 2012 with the Provincial Education Director who requested agriculture trainings for Paktya Agriculture High School students.

On December 25, 2012 AGRED met with Paktya RRD Director, who welcomed AGRED project and talked about the importance and needs of agricultural in Paktya.

AGRED held another meeting on December 22, 2012 to explain its project activities to the Paktya Director of the Economic Directorate. The Director said that the Economics Directorate is supportive to all development activities in Paktya.

AGRED held a meeting with the Economics Director of Balkh Province on December 17, 2012. The director promised to include AGRED in future meetings.

- **Paktya Provincial Development Council (PDC) meeting** - AGRED participated in Paktya PDC meeting on December 19, 2012. AGRED made a brief presentation about its project goals and objectives, and answered questions.
- **Meeting with the MAIL minister at DAIL office in Paktya Province on December 12, 2012**-The MAIL Minister his Excellency Mohammad Asif Rahimi, the Agriculture Provincial Director and the Extension Director visited the DAIL in Paktya Province and met with DAIL, CBCMP and AGRED staff. AGRED gave a brief update on the progress of its activities in the province. During the meeting the Minister listened to the challenges the DAIL is facing, gave advice and recommended solutions. The Minister also promised the representatives from agricultural cooperatives that MAIL will send 20 cooperative members on a foreign study tour.
- **Mini-proposals for research and extension projects identified in Stakeholder Workshops** - In December, AGRED Regional Research and Extension staff drafted 31 mini proposals (12 Research and 19 Extension proposals) for projects identified in the Stakeholder Workshops conducted in the seven target provinces.

Identified Research and Extension Projects in Stakeholder Workshops in seven provinces

No	Region	No of Mini Proposals		Examples
		Research	Extension	
1	Kandahar	3	4	Research: 1-Cumin Cultivation by Seed, 2-Alternative methods of Melon Fly control, 3-Identify the improved variety of Corn Extension: 1-New cultivation methods for cultivation of Okra, 2- New cultivation methods for Corn, 3- New cultivation methods for Melon in Zabul and Helmand, 4-Cucumbers grown under plastic tunnels for Dand, Daman and Arghandab districts of Kandahar province
2	Nangarhar	2	3	Research: 1-Tomato variety adaptation testing, 2-Wheat adaptation testing Extension: 1- New cultivation methods for rice
3	Kabul		1	Extension: 1-Apple nursery establishment
4	Kunduz	1	3	Research: Adaptability research on improved varieties of potatoes Extension: Watermelon and wheat demonstrations
5	Balkh	4	4	Research& Extension: New improved varieties of fodder beets, corn, wheat and tomatoes
6	Paktya	2	2	Research: 1-Adaptation research on new corn varieties, 2-Adaptation research on new potato varieties Extension: 1-Adaptability testing of new improved varieties of tomatoes, 2-Demonstrations of improved wheat varieties,
7	Herat		2	Extension: Demonstrations of improved tomato varieties

- **Selection of women working in Extension and Research and Livestock for upcoming Basic Extension training in January-** Seven women from MAIL and DAILs Extension and Research, and Home Economics Departments were chosen to participate in Basic Extension Trainings to be conducted by trainers from three US universities. The training will be held in the MAIL HR Building in Kabul on Jan 14 -16.
- **Coordination with MAIL and DAILs to identify women from Extension and Research for upcoming trainings-**The women from Bamyan, Jawazjan, Badakhhan,

Jalalabad, Badghis, Saripul and Baghlan provinces were identified to participate in upcoming trainings. The women who attend the trainings will become trainers and role models for women farmers and future women extension workers.



Women participating in Nangarhar Stakeholder Workshop

CHALLENGES

- Some of the offices provided for AGRED staff in the DAILs are in poor condition. They need repairs and refurbishment.
- Due to the relatively small number of women working in extension and research at provincial levels, access to women farmers requires coordination with other local public and private organizations working with women.

TRAININGS AND WORKSHOPS

PRIORITIES

- Conduct planning meetings of WSU Training Consortium in Kabul.

ACTIVITIES

- During the reporting period, a three-person delegation from Washington State University and UC Davis visited Kabul. The objective of this trip was to meet with AGRED staff, MAIL and other counterpart organizations to plan for the upcoming extension trainings. The delegates met with officials from MAIL and discussed the training programs in detail to ensure that these trainings provide relevant information and are in line with MAIL priorities.

The delegates visited Kabul DAIL to access future training venues. They also visited the demo plots in Badam Bagh Farm.

CHALLENGES

The National Workshop on research and extension priorities was originally scheduled for December. MAIL officials were unavailable for the workshop, which will be rescheduled.

COMMUNICATIONS

PRIORITIES

- Assist field staff to identify research and extension priorities and develop mini-proposals.

- Development of the reporting schedule templates.
- Conducting a report-writing workshop for AGRED field staff.
- Finalize first AGRED quarterly report.
- Approval of AGRED October Monthly Report.

PLANS

- **Report writing workshop for AGRED field staff**-On December 8, 2012 the Communications Department conducted a one-day report writing training for AGRED Extension and Research Coordinators from target provinces. The objective of this training was to introduce the approved report template and a reporting schedule.
- **Identification of research and extension priorities and development of mini-proposals**-Twelve Regional and Provincial Coordinators summarized the research and extension priorities identified in Stakeholder Workshops under the supervision of the Communications Manager.
- **Working on the reporting template and workflow**-The Communications Manager, the ROP Program Specialist and AGRED COP developed a template for project reports and an efficient reporting schedule. The new process will streamline the reporting process and ensure that future AGRED reports are submitted on schedule.
- **Monthly reports** - The Communications Department drafted monthly reports based on information provided by extension and research, training and field staff.
- **Development and finalization of first AGRED quarterly report**-Based on the information of July- September monthly reports, the first quarterly report was developed and submitted to USAID for the approval.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

PRIORITIES

- Submit second draft of AGRED's Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP)
- Develop of AGRED M&E system
- Hire of full-time M&E staff

ACTIVITIES

- AGRED hired short-term M&E expert Margaret Orwig to revise AGRED's PMP which incorporates indicators for both AGRED off-budget and MAIL on-budget activities. Several meetings were held between AGRED and USAID M&E staff to define the PMP indicators. The AGRED PMP was finalized and submitted to USAID for review and approval on December 17th.

- The AGRED M&E Specialist developed a work plan for rolling out the AGRED M&E system, beginning with baseline studies. The AGRED baseline surveys will begin with an inventory of research and extension centers in the target provinces. The inventories of research and extension centers will be completed in January.

The ROP M&E Specialist began interviewing candidates for two M&E positions. No qualified candidates were identified in December, but recruitment will continue in January.

ACTIVITIES FOR JANUARY

RESEARCH AND EXTENSION

PRIORITIES

- Write mini-proposals for DAIL Research and Extension programs.
- Participate in Agricultural Technical Working Group (ATWG) and Provincial development Council (PDC) meetings in target provinces.
- Develop research and extension inventory and human resource mapping tools.
- Conduct coordination meetings with DAIL Directors and Research and Extension Managers in target provinces.
- Recruit Women Extension Coordinators for Nangarhar, Kunduz, Balkh, Paktya, Herat and Kandahar provinces.
- Coordination meeting with MAIL women working in Extension, Livestock and Home Economics about the upcoming National Conference.
- Meet with MAIL Home Economics to discuss their activities and priorities in the seven target provinces.

PLANS

- In preparation for infrastructure refurbishment activities, AGRED Research and Extension staff will conduct an inventory of provincial research and extension centers.
- Work with MAIL Extension and Home Economics Departments will ensure participation of women in upcoming training led by WSU Consortium trainers.
- AGRED will develop a Strategic Communication Plan for its Women's Program to reach women farmers more effectively and with greater sustainability.
- Recruitment of Women Coordinators for Jalalabad, Herat, Mazar, Kunduz, Paktia and Kandahar provinces.
- Meeting and working with research and extension staffs in the target provinces. Identification of women working in extension and research in DAILs.
- Equip regional and provincial field offices with furniture and equipment.

CHALLENGES

- Delays in providing on-budget funding will delay coordination among AGRED stakeholders.

TRAININGS AND WORKSHOPS

PRIORITIES

- Arrangements for the National Workshop in Kabul.
- Preparation for training on “Extension Principles” led by WSU Consortium.
- WSU and MAIL to develop a master schedule for trainings.

PLANS

- An extension training, led by the WSU Consortium, in partnership with USDA’s AAEP, will be conducted on “Extension Principles.” The AGRED Training Department will collaborate with MAIL and DAILs to ensure the participation of appropriate Extension officers and Managers, and the availability of facilities required for a high quality training program.
- The National Workshop on Research and Extension priorities, originally scheduled for December, will be rescheduled. AGRED Training department will work with MAIL and DAILs to ensure participation of appropriate stakeholders, including women, in this workshop.

CHALLENGES

- The flow of information from MAIL to DAILs, can delay approvals for participation in trainings.

COMMUNICATIONS

PRIORITIES

- Draft AGRED’s second quarterly report.
- Finalize and submit the November Monthly Report.
- Submit the December Monthly Report to USAID.
- Develop the AGRED website development.

PLANS

- Compile and submit the second AGRED quarterly report for October-December.

- Work with ROP Home Office to develop the layout and content for AGRED.af website. The website will serve as a resource to all stakeholders and interested parties, providing quick access to program descriptions, updates and reports. USAID branding and marking will be ensured throughout the website. MAIL Branding and Marking will be incorporated appropriately.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

PRIORITIES

- Conduct inventories and human resources mapping checklists for research and extension centers.
- USAID approval of AGRED Work Plan and PMP.
- Recruit M&E staff.

PLANS

- A baseline study will be initiated immediately after USAID's approval of the AGRED PMP. The study will focus on baseline data for PMP performance indicators. Monitoring tools for the AGRED training program and other activities will be developed and implemented in January.
- Infrastructure, equipment and human resource inventories for research and extension centers will be completed in January. Checklists and guidelines are already developed.
- A meeting will be held to address USAID's comments on the PMP. A revision of the PMP will be submitted to USAID in January for approval.
- Interviews for most of the M&E staff will be completed in January.

CHALLENGES

- The schedule for the baseline survey is subject to USAID's approval of AGRED's PMP. The survey will begin when the PMP is approved.
- Harsh weather may delay the infrastructure, equipment and human resource inventories in some target provinces.

AGRED Year-1 Target Provinces and Districts

#	Province*	Priority Districts
1	Kabul	Shakar Dara, Char Asyab
2	Bamyan	Bamyan
3	Ghazni	Ghazni Center, Khoja Omari, Jaghori
4	Kapisa	Khohistan 2 nd
5	Parwan	Charikar, Sayed Khil
6	Wardak	Maidan Shar
7	Nangarhar	Mohmand Dara, Kama, Sorkhrood, Rodat
8	Kunar	Narang, Khas Kunar
9	Laghman	Qargae
10	Paktya	Gardiz, Ahmad Aba
11	Logar	Mohammad Agha
12	Kandahar	Dand, Daman, Arghandab
13	Helmand	Nadali, Garmsir
14	Urozgan	Trinkot
15	Zabul	Qalat, Shahjoy
16	Herat	Gozara, Pashton Zarghon
17	Badghis	Qadis
18	Balkh	Nahre Shahi, Dehdadi
19	Faryab	Khoja Sabzposh
20	Jawzjan	Aqcha
21	Samangan	Aybak
22	Sar-i-Pul	Sancharak
23	Kunduz	Kunduz Center, Khan Abad
24	Takhar	Taloqan
25	Baghlan	Markazi Baghlan
26	Badakhshan	Kishim

*The seven initial target provinces are highlighted in bold

CALENDER OF EVENTS: DECEMBER 2012

Proposed Date	PSSP Results Framework Activity	Events/ Activities	Purpose	Person Responsible	Venue	Partner/s and Expected Level of GIRoA Representation	Applicable for Branding & Marking
Dec 8	Training and capacity building of research and extension's staff to deliver quality services	Meeting with US university trainers	Training of trainers for upcoming extension activities	AGRED and US university representatives	Kabul	MAIL, US universities representatives	N/A
Dec 9	Training and capacity building of research and extension's staff to deliver quality services	Meeting with CBCMP and MAIL Representatives	Long term training plans	MAIL	Kabul	MAIL Research and Extension Departments, CBCMP, Home Economics Department	
Dec 11	Training and capacity building of research and extension's staff to deliver quality services	Visit the training site with AAEP	Preparation for the training	Badam Bagh	Kabul	AAEP	
Dec 4 Dec 17 Dec 19 Dec 24	Sharing the agricultural information	ATWG meetings	Coordination with DAILs	DAIL	Kunduz Balkh Nangarhar Herat	DAIL, UN agencies,	N/A
Dec 8	Staff trained in project design and proposal development	Report writing workshop	Teach report writing skills	Communication	Kabul	AGRED Extension and research coordinators	USAID
Dec 12	Brief information about AGRED	Meeting with MAIL Minister in Paktya	Receiving advice from Minister	Paktya DAIL	Paktya	DAIL, CBCMP	N/A
Dec 17	M&E systems development	Submission of PMP to USAID	Contract deliverables	M&E	Kabul	AGRED	N/A

CALENDER OF FUTURE EVENTS: JANUARY 2013

Propo sed Date	PSSP Results Framework Activity	Events/ Activities	Purpose	Person Responsible	Venue	Partner/s and Expected Level of GOP Representation	Applicable for Branding & Marking
12- 18 Jan.	Training and capacity building of research and extension's staff to deliver quality services	Extension Training in Kabul	Training of Trainers	AGRED Training Manager	Kabul	MAIL and DAIL Extension and Research Officers and Managers	USAID/ MAIL
19 Jan.	N/A	PMP Meeting in USAID	USAID feedback on draft PMP	AGRED M&E Manager; Maheed Khan	Kabul	N/A	N/A
21-26 Jan.	Training and capacity building of research and extension's staff to deliver quality services	Af/Pack Extension Training	Training of Trainers	AGRED Extension Coordinator	Faisalabad, Pakistan	DAIL extension counterparts could not get visas	
22 Jan.	USAID on-budget funding to MAIL	Meeting with MAIL,USAID and AGRED	Facilitate USAID- MAIL MOU	COR Mark Kelly	MAIL	N/A	
29 Jan.	N/A	USAID Partner Meeting	Coordination with USAID agricultural IPs	AGRED COP Kingsley Bash	Kabul	N/A	

Acronyms

AAEP	USDA Afghan Agricultural Extension Program
ACBAR	Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief
ADT	US Military Agriculture Development Team
AGRED	USAID Afghan Agriculture Research & Extension Development
ATWG	Agriculture Technical Working Group
CBCMP	USDA Capacity Building and Change Management Program
CHAMP	USAID Commercial Horticulture & Agricultural Marketing Program
COP	Chief of Party
CDC	Community Development Council
DAIL	Directorate of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock
DoWA	Directorate of Women Affairs
EC	European Community
GIRoA	Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
IPM	Integrated Pest Management
LOE	Level of Effort
MAIL	Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MoWA	Ministry of Women Affairs
MRRD	Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development
PMP	Performance Management Plan
RADP	USAID Regional Agriculture Development Program
ROP	Roots of Peace
TAMU	Texas A&M University
UCD	University of California, Davis
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USG	United States Government
WSU	Washington State University
RRD	Rural Rehabilitation and Development
PDC	Provincial Development Council